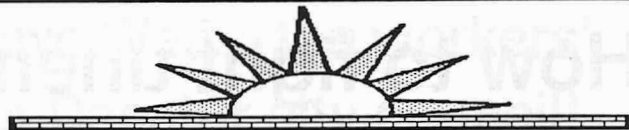


NEW LIFE



A SOCIALIST BULLETIN SERVING THE LABOR PARTY MOVEMENT

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Working class and popular organizations are organizing meetings and demonstrations against the Republicans and their "Contract on America" during April.

We urge all young people, working people, unions, and Labor Party Advocates, to support and participate in these demonstrations.

The Republicans and their "Contract on America" are going to hurt youth and workers of all ethnic groups. Many workers and their families and friends have been forced to turn to food stamps, school lunch programs, and/or welfare payments at one point or another. Many more may be forced to do so in the next downturn. The only workers who have never been forced to turn to these programs, and don't know anyone who has, are the most comfortable. Even these workers will be hurt by these cuts, because these cuts are going to create a more and more desperate group of people.

It's impossible to rely on Democratic Party politicians, even left-wing ones, to lead the fight against the Republicans. While some speak and vote against the Republicans, and some even endorse and come to demonstrations against the Republicans, they refuse to use their positions in public office to mobilize millions. They don't want an independent, mass movement that threatens the Republicans, because it would inevitably threaten their Democratic Party allies.

It's not enough to oppose the Republicans. It is also necessary to have a working class and popular alternative.

While the labor party movement can't adopt a full program right now, the current leadership of Labor Party Advocates could adopt one or two demands that point the way forward and begin to organize workers and trade unionists to fight for them.

This is the only way forward. We can't wait until 1996 to fight for what we need. Workers and their families are suffering now!

Down with the Republicans and the "Contract on America"!

For a working class and popular alternative!

Join the labor party movement! ■

No to the "Contract on America"! Join the labor party movement!

A working-class alternative

- a 35-hour work week without cutting pay by law so that more can work;
- a \$10/hour minimum wage by law;
- health insurance for all
- financed by taxing the richest.
- independent labor candidates to fight for these measures in the 1996 elections.

How to fight unemployment ...

Unemployment in the U.S. is at 5.4%, the lowest it has been since the 1990s, and very close to the rates of the early 1970s.

So why worry about unemployment?

First, the figures hide as much as they reveal.

The 5.4% rate means that 7.2 million people are unemployed. The number of people working part-time who want full-time work and can't find it is 4.2 million, and there are 400,000 who have given up looking for work. If we add all these numbers together, we have nearly 12 million people looking for jobs.

Some of the most populated states had higher rates of unemployment, like California with 7.4%, New Jersey with 6.1%, and Texas with 6.0%.

Unemployment among African-Americans is 9.8%, among Hispanics 9.2%, and among teens age 16-19, 17.2%.

Second, the jobs being created are primarily low-paying service and temporary jobs. Out of the 3.5 million "new" jobs in 1994, only 10% were in manufacturing.

The majority of African-American men aged 25-34 are either unemployed or earn too little to lift a family of four out of poverty (\$14,764).

From 1950-73 real wages doubled. Since then, real wages have stagnated. Those who are working are not making more money; the bosses use unemployed workers to keep employed workers' wages down.

Third, and most importantly, now is the time for working people to fight unemployment. Now is the time to build a movement to protect the working class from the pain and suffering that workers go through when they lose their jobs. Especially with so many social programs being cut by the Democratic and Republican politicians in Washington. Losing a job in the next downturn will be very close to losing your life and your family's lives.

If we fight now, when the next downturn comes and the rich owners want to increase unemployment, the workers will have created a movement and won some demands that will reduce job losses and help preserve the working class.

How to fight unemployment

1. Support all working class and popular struggles against unemployment, includ-

ing struggles against speedup, forced overtime, layoffs, plant-closings and privatization of public services.

The GM workers who went on strike at 6 different plants demanded more workers because they had too much overtime. City, county, state and federal workers, including postal workers, have been fighting to keep their jobs from going to the private sector.

These struggles should be supported by everyone.

2. Join Labor Party Advocates and urge others to do the same.

Both the Democratic and Republican politicians are stuck on one idea to end unemployment — give money to rich owners of business and they will eventually "create" jobs. This is Reagan's "trickle down" economics. The more money of our tax money we give them, the less jobs we have! We need a labor party to fight for jobs now for all workers, not trickled through the hands of parasites.

3. Push for the unions and the labor party to make a common fight for:

— a 35-hour work week without cutting pay by law so that more can work;

We need to make a united, nationwide fight for a shorter workweek without cutting pay by law so that more can work. We won't be able to make much progress if we go workplace by workplace, state by state. But if employed and unemployed workers across the country make a united fight for a law forcing employers to cut working hours without cutting pay, we will make progress.

Some trade unionists are talking about demanding guaranteed jobs or a guaranteed income. But this isn't in the interests of the working class. We all need jobs so that the working class can be bigger and stronger and so that we can work together to produce all the things that people need. When people don't work or study, and still receive an income, it's a drain on the economy. Almost everyone can do something, even people with certain disabilities. And this is best for all concerned in almost all cases. What workers need is jobs. Period. Not jobs or income.

Other trade unions are talking about fighting for a shorter work week by law, but they aren't saying anything about a shorter work week without cutting pay. This is a serious problem. If you fight for a shorter work

week, without saying anything about not cutting pay, you aren't going to get the level of support and unity in the working class that you need to make progress in winning this demand. The workers' wages shouldn't fall; the bosses' profits should.

It is necessary to demand "no reduction in wages." Otherwise, jobs for the unemployed come at the expense of employed workers. This weakens the struggle against unemployment.

— expand the public sector (public health, education, transportation, housing); hire more public workers; tax the richest to finance this expansion;

— public ownership of all large firms that resist these measures;

— independent labor candidates to fight for these measures.

There are all sorts of things that need to be (Continued on page 3)

Our position

1. Support all working class and popular struggles against unemployment, including struggles against speedup, forced overtime, layoffs, plant-closings and privatization of public services.

2. Join Labor Party Advocates and urge others to do the same.

3. Push for the unions and the labor party movement to make a common fight for:
— a 35-hour work week without cutting pay by law so that more can work;
— expand the public sector (public health, education, transportation, housing); hire more public workers; tax the richest to finance this expansion;
— public ownership of all large firms that resist these measures;
— independent labor candidates to fight for these measures.

4. In order to achieve decent jobs for all, the working class is going to have to overthrow the power of the capitalist class, establish a workers' government, and begin to build a society that is more democratic, working class, and socialist, and in which workers divide up all the work that needs to be done among all who can work. The fight for the measures above will be progress in this direction. ■



done. We need people working on all the serious problems facing the society: alcohol addiction, drug addiction, all the mental and physical diseases that start at very young ages. We don't have enough teachers; our classrooms are overcrowded. We need more public transportation, public housing. There are thousands of people with experience in these fields who can't find work in their fields. There are thousands of young people graduating from college looking to find jobs where they can try to tackle these problems and build a better world. The only thing standing in the way are the owners of the banks and biggest corporations who won't provide credits for anything that doesn't enrich them.

When banks and corporations stand in the way of what is essential to protect the working class and the little civilization and culture that exists, then the workers and their unions need to fight for public ownership of these enterprises and put forward their own candidates to fight for these goals in elections.

Socialism

The measures listed above are only temporary solutions to protect workers from suffering and starvation. The only permanent solution to unemployment is the elimination of the drive for profits as the moving force of our economy, replacing it with the needs of the people.

The factories, huge farms and financial institutions are owned by a tiny minority of people. These things were built by millions of workers and serve millions of people. They should be owned by the majority of people. With ownership and control of these things — social property — the workers can organize production so that all the needs of the people are satisfied. This is the first step towards socialism. Under a socialist society, every person will have what they need, and every person will contribute to the society what they are capable of.

The measures listed above help prepare the workers to run the economy. By fighting the rich owners, by winning struggles against unemployment, the workers can train themselves in the skills necessary to run the economy.

But the rich owners will not let the workers develop these skills and make the social property really social. It is a struggle that will not end until all the social property is in the hands of the workers. It is a struggle that begins now. — Fred Russo ■

Victory to Dave Watts, the workers' candidate for Decatur city council!

Dave Watts, head of the locked-out Staley workers' union in Decatur, Illinois, is running for a seat on the 3-person Decatur city council. The elections will be held April 4.

We urge all young people and working people throughout the U.S. to support this struggle in any and every way possible. Send messages of support and contributions to Dave Watts and his supporters; urge all unions to do the same; send volunteers willing to contribute their time to the campaign in Decatur.

Dave Watts has taken a clear stand against the demands of the rich corporate bosses who are ruining the lives of working people — 12-hour rotating shifts (working from 7 in the morning until 7 at night for a few weeks, then from 7 at night until 7 in the morning the next few weeks, making it completely impossible to be healthy and rested, to have any relationship with a partner or children, or to do anything else, like go to school or pursue a hobby); abolition of health and safety regulations; union-busting; abolition of workers' rights to assemble and speak freely.

Dave Watts has also taken a clear stand in favor of a labor party based on the unions, against relying on the Republicans and Democrats to fight for the workers' interests. He is a member of Labor Party Advocates and has spoken publically in favor of Labor Party Advocates.

A victory for Dave Watts will be a victory for every youth and worker in the U.S.

We need workers in public office who will use their positions to fight for the interests of working people, to speak out for working people, against the corporate bosses and all the politicians they own, who, at best, use their positions in public office for purely verbal opposition to one or two of the corporate bosses' worst measures.

A victory for Dave Watts will show the way forward. It will encourage workers, unionists, oppressed peoples, throughout the U.S., to put forward their own candidates for public office in the 1996 elections, to fight for the things that workers need — more jobs, higher wages, better healthcare benefits, and more.

This is why we think it is so absolutely essential for every youth, worker, activist, and working class organization to take some



Roger Gates, president of United Rubber Workers Local 713, Larry Solomon, president of UAW Local 751 (Caterpillar) and Dave Watts, president of UPIU Local 7-837 (Staley).

time out from whatever struggle that he or she is involved in, and contribute some time and/or money — no matter how little or how much — to Dave Watts and the Decatur workers' campaign for Decatur city council.

We have no illusions. A victory for Dave Watts in the Decatur city council elections won't mean the struggle is over. The unions need to do a lot more for locked-out and striking workers. They need to:

- cut funds to Republicans and Democrats, cut union officials' wages to the level of the average worker's wages, and send a large part of the difference to workers who are locked-out or on strike;

- refuse to handle Staley, Caterpillar, Bridgestone-Firestone and other scab products; organize large picketlines to stop scabs and strikebreakers.

If Staley, Cat, and Bridgestone-Firestone still refuse to sign a decent union contract, the unions should organize a one-day national workstoppage and fight for public ownership of these union-busting firms.

But a victory for Dave Watts in the Decatur elections will inspire workers throughout the country and open up a new period of struggle.

All out for Dave Watts, the workers' candidate for Decatur City Council!

Victory on April 4th!

For further information contact Dave Watts' campaign manager, Dan Kreshenska at 217-425-5747.

Send statements of support and contributions to: Friends of Labor, 2645 N. 22nd St., Decatur, IL 62526. ■



Labor Party Advocates and the New Party

Members of *New Life* have been involved in building Labor Party Advocates for some time. We have found that rank-and-file workers and young people of all ethnic groups are very favorable to building a labor party, and have recruited a small number to Labor Party Advocates.

However, we have also found that many activists claim to be *for* a labor party, but they are very critical of Labor Party Advocates. They complain that LPA hasn't yet set a date for the convention to found the labor party, that it hasn't yet adopted any kind of program or platform, that it isn't planning on running candidates in 1996, that the current leadership isn't sufficiently sensitive to people of color and women.

Some of these people are putting forward the New Party as a better alternative.

We think that this is a mistake.

The New Party is obviously more in the interests of and closer to the working class than the Republican and Democratic Parties. It calls for: "Full employment, a shorter work week ... a universal 'social wage' to include such basic benefits as health care, child care, vacation time, and lifelong access to education and training ..." In certain situations, workers might want to forge an alliance with the New Party to fight for certain demands, or vote for New Party candidates against Republican or Democratic Party candidates.

But working women and working men of all ethnic groups still need to build their *own* political party to fight for their own interests, not only against the ruling capitalist class, but also against the middle classes.

Workers of all ethnic groups need to build their own political party because workers are the only ones that workers can rely on to fight for their interests. While elements from other classes have broken with their classes, devoted themselves to the working class, and played a critical role in the struggle, this is very unusual. It's the exception that proves the rule.

Workers need a shorter work week without cutting pay so that more can work, a higher minimum wage, and inexpensive health insurance for all. Making progress in winning these demands is going to mean that the working class is going to get bigger and stronger; the capitalist ruling class and middle classes are going to get smaller and



Alicia Sanchez of the Hotel Union near San Francisco advocates a Labor Party at the LPA hearings held in San Francisco last fall.

weaker. Thus workers, and those devoted to them, are the only ones that can be relied on to make a consistent struggle for these demands.

In addition, the working class is the only class that can solve the problems facing society. It is the only class that is accustomed to work together to produce and distribute the things that people need in a collective and disciplined way. The capitalist ruling class and the sections of the middle class closest to it are accustomed to enriching themselves at the expense of the people. The sections of the middle classes closest to the working class tend to vacillate between the working class and the upper middle classes. They can't be relied on to make a consistent fight for a society in which workers will be comfortable.

The working class, on the other hand, can develop a program aimed at unifying the working class and the best sections of the middle classes against the capitalist ruling class, and at gradually drawing these classes into the working class. When everyone is part of the working class, making some kind of contribution to the production and distribution of basic necessities, society will be able to make tremendous progress.

But, again, in order to do this, the workers need their own party.

Labor Party Advocates is the only organization that is working to build a working class party based on the only mass working class organizations in the U.S., the unions, and that is open to all for a working class party. "The bosses have two parties, the workers should have at least one," is its slogan.

The New Party isn't trying to do this. In twelve pages of its most recent newsletter, *New Party News*, the editors didn't even mention the working class once, and mentioned the unions only in passing.

This is why we think that Labor Party Advocates, with all the problems it may have, is still the only way forward for the working class, and the sections of the middle classes closest to it. — M. Guttschall ■

Our position

1. Workers need their own working class political party to fight for their interests. Labor Party Advocates is the only organization working to build a working class party based on the only mass working class organizations in the U.S., the unions, and that is open to all for a working class party. So it is still the best way forward, no matter what problems it may have.
2. The New Party and other third party formations may be more in the interests of the working class than the Republicans or Democrats. It might be best for workers to make alliances with the New Party to fight for certain demands or to support New Party candidates against Republican or Democratic Party candidates in certain situations. But the New Party is not a good alternative to Labor Party Advocates because it is not trying to build a *working class party*. ■

For an independent socialist youth organization ...

In the last few years, the number of young people interested in socialism has really begun to grow. More young people are joining socialist organizations, including socialist youth organizations like the Young Socialists, associated with the Socialist Workers Party.

Unfortunately, the new generation of socialists is still divided along the same lines as the previous generation was divided — Communist Party, Committees of Correspondence, Socialist Workers Party, International Socialist Organization, Solidarity, and others. Even when socialist youth organizations have been formed, like the Young Socialists, they've given youth associated with different socialist tendencies the cold shoulder.

In our opinion, this situation is a real obstacle to the development of the socialist revolution in the U.S., and to the development of the kind of party necessary to lead to victory.

We've gone through a long period in the U.S. in which the struggle between the classes has been muffled. Many working class and socialist organizations have adapted themselves to this situation: they've become opportunist and corrupt, or sterile sectarian sects totally isolated from the masses of youth and workers, or both.

The fall of the U.S. as the number one world power, and the fall of the total dictatorship of the privileged bureaucracy in the old USSR, have really changed this situation. They've opened up a new period of working class and popular struggle in which there will certainly be one working class and popular revolutionary attempt after another.

What the working class needs today, more than anything else, are working class revolutionaries totally devoted to the working class, who orient toward the most advanced working class and popular struggles, who work to lead them as far as possible, learn everything that they can from them, study the lessons of the past, and work to clarify and disseminate working class revolutionary principles, strategy, tactics, and methods, in accord with the interests of the working class. A special effort is necessary to rid revolutionary thinking and practice of all the garbage that has accumulated as a result of the fact that the class struggle has been so muffled in the last years, and the labor movement has been dominated by the

“The new generation of young socialists has a critical role to play in this struggle ...”



most backward sections.

The new generation of young socialists has a critical role to play in this struggle, because they almost always begin by entering into the struggles that are taking place today and by reading and studying the great revolutionary Marxists — Marx, Engels, Lenin, Trotsky ... So they often look at things with fresh eyes, and assimilate the truth more clearly and quickly, with brains unhampered by old habits and lies.

But in order to do this, they really need their own, independent socialist organization in which they have an opportunity to discuss and decide what they think and act on it. Dividing the new generation, from the very beginning, along the lines of the previous generations, hampers its ability to develop its own contribution.

Does this mean that the older generation has nothing to offer, that all the splits that took place were meaningless, simply capitulations to the bourgeoisie trying to divide the workers — Stalinists, Maoists, Castroists, Trotskyists, etc.?

Not at all.

Young people can learn a lot from the previous generation of socialists, especially the most working class and revolutionary Trotskyists, who continued to fight for socialism against both the imperialists and capitalists and against the privileged bureaucracy around the ruling Communist Party in the old USSR, and they did so in very difficult conditions.

But young people can best learn from the previous generation by participating in the movement for a big workers party, in the struggle for socialism within this movement, and by building their own independent socialist organization in which they do their own thinking. For a revolutionary, there is absolutely no substitute for learning to do one's own thinking. — M.G. ■

Our position:

1. A new generation of working class and middle class youth is beginning to turn to socialism. This is a very positive development.
2. This new generation should not be divided, from the very beginning, by the same divisions which separated the previous generations.
3. The new generation of socialist youth needs its own independent socialist youth organization in which socialist youth have an opportunity to discuss and decide what they think about all the different issues and organize themselves to fight for their views.
4. We urge socialist youth to join forces and build an independent and united socialist youth organization based on basic revolutionary Marxist principles. Socialist and communist tendencies in the labor party movement should support this effort. ■



Young people need a labor party and the labor party movement needs young people!



Flyers urging young people to join LPA designed and distributed by LPA supporters.

Facing facts like an unemployment rate of 17.2% among 16 to 19 year olds actively looking for unemployment or the rising cost of a college education is frightening to most young people. They see no way to fight these problems that they face. The Democrats and Republican Party's offer them no answers or even an avenue to use to fight their problems.

So where can they go to find ways to fight for issues that concern them? A labor party could give young workers and students a way to address their problems. It could provide them with the information they need to create a fight for real solutions to their problems and the power to back them up.

Labor Party Advocates is actively working to build a labor party in the United States and young people need to be part of that process. Young people have the energy and drive Labor Party Advocates needs. An example of this is the student walk-out in Los Angeles over Proposition 187. While community activists and groups held meetings on what to do, the students took action and held mass walk-outs.

Labor Party Advocates needs this ability so it can reach out to people.

Young people need to insure that a labor party will fight for their demands and the only way that they can insure it is by being active in the forming of the party, as well as the building of its platform.

Inside of Labor Party Advocates, young members have realized this and have put together a young workers' and students'

recruiting committee to have a voice for the youth in Labor Party Advocates and attract more young people to Labor Party Advocates.

Youth need a labor party! — Tim James ■

Youth look for its voice in a labor party

The young workers' and students' recruitment committee (made up of young members of Labor Party Advocates [LPA]) is working on ways to make LPA more accessible to young people. The committee feels that the image of LPA is aimed too much at older workers and puts off young people and prevents them from checking out LPA. The committee is putting together new informational materials, flyers, and activities aimed at young people, that deal with the concerns of young workers and students.

The committee feels that the only way for young people to have their problems addressed by a labor party is for them to be actively involved in forming a labor party. Most young people have no doubt that their problems cannot be answered by Republicans or Democrats. They also must realize a labor party will only help them if they're involved in forming the direction of the party and active in its decision making. Youth needs its own voice in the labor party.

Some of the committee's recruitment activities are aimed at local coffee houses, where a growing number of young people spend time, where they show videos, make posters and hold discussion groups on current events. The committee is also looking into local area events where they can put up tables, pass out literature. All of these activities are aimed at setting out LPA to young workers and students. — T. J. ■

Labor movement speaks out at coffee bar

At the Zone coffee bar's open mike night a few weeks ago, young members of LPA showed a video on the struggle of Staley workers who have been locked out for 18 months.

The audience of 35 people, made up mostly

of young workers and students, watched intently and afterward held a discussion of the need for a labor party.

Many of the people said the video hit close to home, giving examples of lock-outs or strikes that they or members of their families were involved in. Mostly everyone agreed that the Democrats and Republicans were a "bunch of bums" and "corporate yes men." They felt a labor party is a good idea. But they were concerned that it could end up corrupt and not represent working people if it is run by bureaucrats, similar to what has happened with the union leadership. Most felt this could be prevented if people keep active inside the party.

Flyers for future LPA youth activity were passed out and the LPA members asked people what activities they would be interested in participating or topics they would be interested in discussing. — T.J. ■

On youth

"The movement is revitalized by the youth who are free of responsibility of the past. The Fourth International pays particular attention to the young generation of the proletariat. All of its policies strive to inspire the youth with belief in its own strength and in the future. Only the fresh enthusiasm and aggressive spirit of the youth can guarantee the preliminary successes in the struggle; only these successes can return the best elements of the older generation to the road of the revolution. Thus it was, thus it will be."

"Opportunist organizations by their very nature concentrate their chief attention on the top layers of the working class and therefore ignore both the youth and the woman worker. The decay of capitalism, however, deals its heaviest blows to the woman as a wage-earner and as a housewife. The sections of the Fourth International should seek bases of support among the most exploited layers of the working class; consequently, among the women workers. Here they will find inexhaustible stores of devotion, selflessness and readiness to sacrifice." (from the Fourth International's program, 1938)



Rally in Washington D.C. to demonstrate "We won't go back!"

The National Organization for Women (NOW) is sponsoring a massive demonstration on April 9th in Washington D.C. to stop violence against women. This is an opportunity for all women to come together and demand our *right* to live free of battering from domestic partners, and free from attacks on the streets and in our homes. The NOW rally will also call for an end to abortion clinic violence, and the "tyrannical measures of the Republican 'Contract On America'" which attacks poor women and children and threatens all of us.

It's extremely important that we see the connections between these different attacks. Each of them may come from different individuals at different levels, but all are attempts to limit our freedom and to make our lives not our own. The men in Washington who cut welfare funds or allow anti-abortion terrorists to go unpunished accomplish the same thing as the men in our houses who hit us — they add more fear, more ways we have to look over our shoulders.

The best thing we can do to fight against violence and fear being forced upon us is to band together. When we are all pulling at once — when we're all in one place at a rally or demonstration — it gives each one of us more strength than we had alone. Most of all, it's important for working class and poor women to take our places in this struggle — to defend ourselves!

Let's make this rally on April 9th the loudest battle cry yet from women all over the country. We must all *refuse* to give back the small freedoms we've won and press on for

New Life is a socialist bulletin published in the interests of the labor party movement. *New Life* is a supporter of the Fourth International, the world party of the socialist revolution, founded by Leon Trotsky and his comrades. Signed articles do not necessarily represent the views of *New Life*. These are expressed in editorials. Editorial Board: Tim James, Margaret Guttshall, Kim Morgan, Fred Russo.

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the chance to live our lives without fear. — K. Morgan

For information about bus transportation to Washington D.C., call the Detroit Chapter NOW office at 313-273-7400. If you can't go, but can contribute some money toward sending a resident from a battered women's shelter, you can send your contribution to: Detroit Chapter NOW, P.O. Box 19670, Detroit, MI 48219. — K. Morgan ■

LPA at International Women's Day

On Saturday, March 11th, women from all over Southeast Michigan celebrated International Women's Day at UAW Local 600. The 9th annual event featured a program on domestic violence (including a self-defense demonstration), multi-cultural performances of poetry, readings and music, and authentic ethnic cuisine. Over 75 political and community groups participated and/or supported the event. And nearly 50 booths sold crafts, jewelry, books, food, etc

Labor Party Advocates (LPA) was one of the participating/supporting groups and had a table with literature about the Labor Party movement and LPA buttons. The Detroit LPA Women's Recruiting Committee collected several names and phone numbers of women who are interested in supporting the women's struggles in the Detroit area — particularly the current union organizing drive at Mexican Industries plants and efforts to defend women's right to choose abortion.

If you are interested in joining these struggles along with Detroit Chapter LPA women, please call 313-730-4530 and leave a message for K. M. — K.M. ■

Women militia members in Chiapas. ⇨

What is International Women's Day?

Most of us know that the working conditions were horrible for workers in 1908. Women and children toiled in sweltering factories with poor light and ventilation, where fires often broke out. What we don't hear much about is how workers fought these conditions. That's why International Women's Day is so significant: it's the anniversary of the day 15,000 women marched through the New York garment district to protest their working conditions.

On March 8, 1908, these garment workers carried banners demanding an end to sweatshop conditions, child labor, and 10-12 hour work days. They protested the filthy conditions, poor heat and ventilation, and lighting which caused some women to go blind by age 25. They demanded rest breaks and an end to firey death traps caused by doors and windows locked from the outside. And they recognized that to truly achieve these demands they must take the fight to a higher level — they called for the right to vote and the right to form unions.

As a recognition of the inspirational demonstration these women made, the Congress of the Socialist International designated March 8th a world-wide holiday in honor of working women. It has since been acknowledged by other major events: During World War I, the German women's movement held the country's first anti-war demonstration on that day. Then, on International Women's Day 1917, Russian women textile workers began a strike which became a 500,000-strong general strike and marked the beginning of the Russian Revolution.

Women have always been among the first ranks of militants fighting for a better life. They still are today. If we recognized that, by acknowledging International Women's Day, we build on our strength for our present and future struggles. — K.M. ■

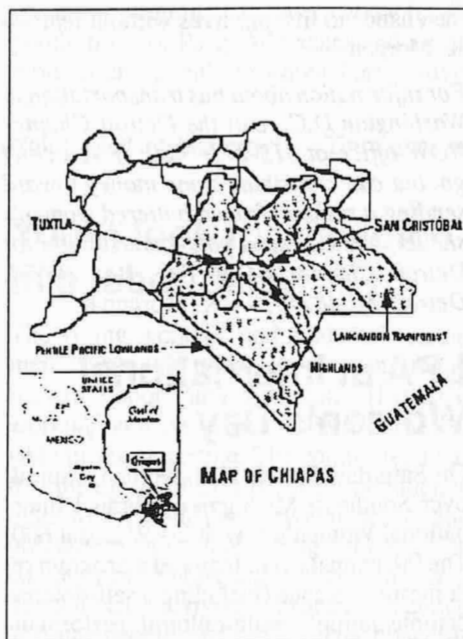


Why U.S. workers should fight for the Zapatistas ...

Over a year has passed since the Zapatista National Liberation Army (Ejercito Zapatista de Liberacion Nacional-EZLN) in Chiapas, Mexico, declared war on the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Since that time, it has become clear that the uprising of the Zapatistas and the indigenous peoples in Chiapas, is one element in a larger struggle on the part of the Mexican people as a whole against U.S. corporations, the U.S. government, and their allies in Mexico, for democratic rights and basic necessities like land, jobs, wages, healthcare, etc.

Since the Mexican revolution in the early 1900s, in which Mexican workers and peasants rose up and kicked out foreign landholders and capitalists from both the U.S. and Spain, U.S. corporations have been working to take back Mexico, which is very rich in natural resources, especially oil, and industry, so that they can use Mexican land, forests, oil, industries, and relatively inexpensive labor, to enrich themselves at the expense of the Mexican people. In order to achieve this goal, U.S. corporations and the U.S. government have worked closely with Mexican landholders and capitalists, and with the ruling political party, the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI). These forces in turn have done everything possible to try to retain power, and suppress the growing opposition within Mexico to their collaboration with U.S. corporations and the U.S. government in selling Mexico to the highest bidder.

Most recently, Clinton lent the Mexican government \$50 billion to sustain the value of the Mexican peso. At the same time, Chase Manhattan Bank called for eliminating the Zapatistas. "The government will have to eliminate the Zapatistas to demonstrate their effective control of the national territory and security policy" (Chase's Jan. 13 "Political Update on Mexico"). The Mexican government army invaded Chiapas, drove the Zapatistas and indigenous peoples into the hills, where some are now starving. The CIA is also using heat-sensitive devices to try to track the Zapatistas in the Lacandon Jungle. Workers and oppressed peoples in Mexico responded with demonstrations of 100,000 and 200,000 in Mexico City, demanding an end to the war on the Zapatistas and the withdrawal of government forces from Chiapas, and forced the government to



retreat, at least for the moment. But the struggle is far from over.

U.S. banks and oil men are dead set on taking over Mexico. They have already acquired a lien on the Mexican national oil industry. This means that all profits from the sale of Mexican oil will go *first* to U.S. bankers. And they will stop at nothing to protect and increase their profits — even mass murder of thousands of innocent women and children — as the recent experience in Iraq shows.

U.S. workers, on the other hand, have every reason to support the Zapatistas, the indigenous people of Chiapas, and the Mexican people as a whole, against U.S. corporations, the U.S. government, and their allies in Mexico, the PRI. If the Zapatistas, Chiapas, and workers and farmers' Mexico, are successful in overthrowing the PRI, establishing a government and a society that are more representative of the workers and farmers of Mexico, and driving U.S. corporations out, it will be a terrible blow against the rich owners of the giant corporations in the U.S., and open the door to doing the same thing in the U.S. — a working class and popular revolution!

On the other hand, if U.S. banks and their hired guns succeed in crushing the Zapatistas, Chiapas, Mexico, Mexico will become a center of unprecedented exploitation. U.S. corporations will continue to close operations in the U.S. and move them south where

workers will have no choice but to work in the worst conditions. There won't be peace or prosperity for the majority of the people in the U.S. or Mexico.

What can U.S. workers do to help the Zapatistas and others of Chiapas and Mexico to fight U.S. corporations? Fight for a union campaign to:

- Stop all U.S. aid to the Mexican government!
- U.S.-backed troops out of Chiapas now!
- Union aid to the Zapatistas!

With a united struggle against the bosses in the U.S. and Mexico, workers and oppressed peoples in both countries will be invincible.—M. Guttshall■

Our position

1. U.S. banks, oil corporations, Republicans and Democrats, are behind the Mexican government's war on the Zapatistas, the people of Chiapas, and the majority of the Mexican people. U.S. capitalists want to take over Mexico and use its land, natural resources, and labor to enrich itself at the expense of the majority of the people within Mexico.

2. U.S. workers of all ethnic groups need to make an all-out fight against U.S. corporations' war on the Zapatistas, Chiapas, and the Mexican people. There will never be peace and prosperity in the U.S., Mexico, or anywhere else, as long as U.S. corporations and their puppets are allowed to wage war on whole peoples and nations to satisfy their insatiable thirst for profits — Vietnam, Cuba, Nicaragua, Iraq ...

3. The best way to fight U.S. corporations and their puppets and to aid the Mexican people is to build the largest possible working class and popular mobilization to:

- Stop all U.S. aid to the Mexican dictatorship!
- U.S.-backed troops out of Chiapas now!
- Union aid to the Zapatistas now!